

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES N. BIKAKIS

HON. KEVIN MCCARTHY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chuck Bikakis, who recently retired as the Director of the Kern County Veterans Service Department. Chuck has been a motivated and passionate advocate for our veterans in Kern County for the past 14 years.

A veteran of the United States Marine Corps, Chuck received his Bachelor's degree from the United States Naval Academy and entered the Marine Corps in 1960. Chuck retired with the rank of Major after 20 years of service. In that time, Chuck served our country in Vietnam from August 1968 through September 1969.

After his retirement from the Marine Corps in 1980, Chuck relocated to Bakersfield and worked in real estate. He then worked in a Job Developer position with the Kern County Employers' Training Resource starting in January 1994 until the Kern County Board of Supervisors appointed him to the position of Director of the Kern County Veterans Service Department. Chuck held the position of Director of the Veterans Service Department since April 20, 1998.

Shortly after his appointment, Chuck relocated the Veterans Service Department to its current location and established the Kern County Veterans Services center. This one-stop Center now includes a Job Developer from Employers' Training Resource and a computer resource room. He was instrumental in bringing to Bakersfield the California Veterans Assistance Foundation, which operates a transitional housing program for veterans.

There are many other examples of Chuck's leadership that will continue to benefit veterans of Kern County for years to come. Chuck's concern for homeless veterans led to the first Kern County Homeless Veterans Stand Down during October 1999. With the assistance and support of veteran organizations, community volunteers, and local businesses, Stand Down has become an annual event that provides outreach and guidance to homeless veterans to give them the opportunity toward a new beginning away from life on the streets. Chuck has also collected funds to assist the families of deployed servicemembers and was an active participant in the design and development of the Kern County Veterans Memorial and the Bakersfield National Cemetery.

Dedicated to education and service on multiple levels, Chuck's retirement will leave big shoes to fill at the Kern County Veterans Service Department. I commend his service to the thousands of veterans in our area, thank him for his dedication, and join many members in our community in wishing Chuck our best wishes as he embarks into the next chapter of his life.

THE EFFICIENT EXPORT PROMOTION TO HELP AMERICAN BUSINESSES ACT OF 2012

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill with the support of Congressman REICHERT to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our country's export promotion efforts. Over the next decade exports will be this country's biggest growth engine for jobs. Even though most everyone knows that, everyone also agrees the United States does not do a great job of promoting our exports. But with commonsense no-cost reforms, we can take big steps to change that—and create jobs faster and compete better with other countries.

There are about 20 agencies in the Federal Government working hard to promote our exports—and they're all overseen by an effort centered in the called the Trade Promotion Coordinating Committee, TPCC, created by President Clinton in 1993.

The fact that most people have never heard of it says a lot about why we're not succeeding. My bill would put more energy into their efforts.

First, this bill would make sure the TPCC and all the agencies it coordinates has a single plan every year, sets clear goals and ensures the export efforts of all of these agencies are coordinated and do not overlap.

Second, my bill would require an annual report to businesses and Congress that looks back on the government's efforts to promote exports, the private sector's progress, where the Federal Government's work succeeded and came up short, how we're competing with other countries and what our next steps are.

Finally, my bill gets businesses and the TPCC much better data so we actually know how we are doing. Right now our Services export and import numbers are up to 35 percent off because Congress does not let the statisticians in the Commerce Department see all the data they need. Businesses want accurate economic data and people who promote our exports have to have it too. This is a place where Congress is in the way and we should fix it.

More than 50 other countries promote their exports and most of those countries do a better job than we do. This bill would go a long way towards making us number one.

This bill would cost the American taxpayer nothing, but go a long way towards making our export efforts more efficient, more accountable, and would help us create more jobs here at home. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO WINFRED YOUNG
"CHUCK" LORD**HON. JO BONNER**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2012

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the exemplary life of a beloved and respected citizen of South Alabama, Mr. Winfred Young "Chuck" Lord, who recently passed away at the age of 75.

If we are truly fortunate, we may have an opportunity to get to know a person or two who is an inspiration in all that they do. Such people leave lifelong impressions on family and friends and their example calls us to be our best as well. To all who knew him, Chuck Lord was such an inspiration.

A native of Atlanta and a longtime resident of Mobile, Chuck Lord embodied the qualities of hard work, dedication to family and devotion to faith that made this country great. Hard work met up with him at an early age. Beginning at age 13, he labored to support himself and, at 17, he joined the Navy where he served for three years as a machinist aboard the USS *St. Paul*, a *Baltimore*-class heavy cruiser.

After completing his duty to country, Chuck Lord returned to civilian life, taking a job at McDonnell Douglas Aircraft Company in California. It was also in the Golden State that he met his future wife, Patricia. After a three-month courtship, they married, embarking on a journey that endured for 52 years.

In 1974, they bought a small vacuum business in Mobile. Chuck's hard work and skill led A&A Vacuum to expand to new locations in Mobile and Fairhope, transforming the company into a regional institution.

Chuck Lord was known as a fighter, giving his family and his business his full measure of attention even in the face of serious health conditions. Even as he recovered from heart transplant surgery, he insisted upon helping to run his business. Similarly, when he suffered kidney disease, he chose to undergo dialysis during the evenings so as not to interfere with his work schedule.

Chuck Lord treated his customers with the same dutiful attention to detail, earning him the respect and friendship of many.

On behalf of the people of South Alabama, I would like to extend my condolences to his wife Patricia, their children, Susan, Michael, Jenny, David, Dan, and Tony; their 28 grandchildren and two great grandchildren, and many friends. You are all in our prayers.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4310) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2013 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2013, and for other purposes:

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Chair, the Fiscal Year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act contains badly needed reforms that are vital to our national security and our defense industrial base.

America's small business industrial base has supported our military for generations, and their participation enhances competition, helps control costs, and spurs American innovation. H.R. 4310 recognizes that our defense maintenance needs are best met when we have capabilities both internally in the Department of Defense and in a private sector where work is competitively awarded.